

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10
NSAE-00 PA-01 ICA-11 SP-02 AID-05 TRSE-00 EB-08
PM-05 NSC-05 SS-15 OES-07 COME-00 OMB-01 L-03
H-01 INT-05 /106 W
-----113129 170652Z /20

R 161336Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6798
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW POUCH
AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

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USEEC

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAID, EFIS, EQIP, PEPR, GY, UR
SUBJECT: GUYANESE-SOVIET COOPERATION

REF: GEORGETOWN 1255 (NOTAL)

1. DURING A PRESS CONFERENCE ON MAY 13, 1978, PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM STATED THAT THE SOVIET/GUYANESE FISHERIES PROTOCOL (REFTEL) WOULD BE A JOINT VENTURE FOR THE CATCHING, PROCESSING, AND MARKETING OF MARINE RESOURCES. IN RESPONSE TO A JOURNALIST'S QUESTION, BURNHAM STATED THAT GUYANA HAD REJECTED A SOVIET PROPOSAL TO ALLOW A SOVIET FACTORY VESSEL TO OPERATE IN GUYANA TERRITORIAL WATERS FOR ONE YEAR BEFORE A JOINT
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VENTURE WOULD BE INITIATED. BURNHAM SAID THAT NEXT MONTH A SOVIET DELEGATION WOULD ARRIVE TO DISCUSS THE FISHERIES QUESTION, AND THAT A MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY AGREEMENT WOULD BE REACHED PROVIDING FOR JOINT EXPLOITATION.

2. IT WAS ALSO STATED THAT A SOVIET TEAM IS IN GUYANA TO EXPLORE A PROJECT TO NEARLY TRIPLE GUYANA'S 300,000

TON ANNUAL ALUMINA PRODUCTION. NO FURTHER DETAILS ON THE DISCUSSION WERE GIVEN. THE PRIME MINISTER AND GOVERNMENT OWNED LOCAL PRESS EMPHASIZED THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAD AGREED TO BUY GUYANESE GOODS WITH LOCAL CURRENCY DERIVED FROM PURCHASES UNDER THE MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT PROTOCOL.

3. COMMENT: AMBASSADOR QUERIED HIS SOVIET COLLEAGUE (AMBASSADOR KOTENEV) MAY 15 REGARDING BURNHAM'S STATEMENT AT MAY 13 PRESS CONFERENCE THAT USSR HAD AGREED TO ASSIST GUYANA IN REALIZING THREE-FOLD INCREASE IN ITS ALUMINA PRODUCTION CAPACITY. KOTENEV AT FIRST SUGGESTED THAT BURNHAM'S REMARKS HAD BEEN PREMATURE, BUT DID CONFIRM THAT SOVIET TEAM WAS IN GUYANA LOOKING INTO THE POSSIBILITY AND WENT ON TO SAY THAT IF GOG AGREED TO THE TERMS (UNSPECIFIED) THE USSR MIGHT INDEED BE WILLING TO ASSIST IN THE EXPANSION OF GUYANA'S ALUMINA PRODUCTION FACILITIES. KOTENEV SAID THAT THIS MIGHT INVOLVE AN EXPANSION OF THE EXISTING PLANT, BUT MORE LIKELY WOULD REQUIRE THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW ALUMINA PLANT. WHEN ASKED WHERE POWER TO RUN THE PLANT MIGHT COME FROM, KOTENEV SAID THAT SOME SORT OF HYDRO-ELECTRIC FACILITY WAS ALSO BEING CONSIDERED AS PART OF THE PACKAGE.

4. NO FURTHER DETAILS ON THE PREVIOUSLY SIGNED TRADE AGREEMENTS (REFTEL) WERE GIVEN. ALTHOUGH THE AGREELIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MENTS ARE BEING HERALDED IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT-OWNED PRESS AS A WAY OUT OF GUYANA'S PRECARIOUS ECONOMIC SITUATION, THERE IS NO INDICATION AS TO THEIR PRECISE EXTENT. END COMMENT. BURKE

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